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SUBJECT: PRESS GUIDANCE FOR KOSOVO DECLARATION  
OF INDEPENDENCE

11. (U) This is an action request. Posts are requested to use the following points in responding to questions about Kosovo's declaration of independence.

12. (U) Background: Kosovo Prime Minister Thaci called a special meeting of the Assembly today, where parliamentarians voted to pass a declaration of independence. Russia and Serbia have continued to oppose independence for Kosovo. Serbia's government approved a "decision" on Friday in which it said it would strengthen the presence of GoS authorities in Kosovo in response to a declaration of independence.

13. (U) POINTS FOR USE ON KOSOVO:

Q: What is the U.S. reaction to the unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo?

--- We note that today Kosovo declared its independence. We welcome the Kosovo government's clear commitment to implement far-reaching provisions of the plan developed by UN Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari to protect ethnic minority communities.

--- The United States is now reviewing this issue and discussing the matter with its European partners. We expect to issue a statement very shortly.

--- The United States has long believed that the Ahtisaari Plan, including its recommendation of supervised independence for Kosovo, was the best way to promote regional stability and enable both Serbia and Kosovo to move forward on the Euro-Atlantic path.

--- The United States will remain steadfast in its support for the rights of all ethnic and religious communities in Kosovo. The Ahtisaari plan calls for serious measures to protect Kosovo's minorities.

--- The United States calls on all parties to exercise the utmost restraint and to refrain from any provocative acts. NATO's KFOR mission will continue to respond firmly to maintain a safe and secure environment for all communities throughout Kosovo.

14. Minimize considered.  
RICE